DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 472 749 CE 084 340

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| AUTHOR | Askov, Eunice N. |
| TITLE | Family Literacy: A Research Agenda to Build the Future. Report from Penn State's Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy Think Tank. |
| INSTITUTION | Pennsylvania State Univ., University Park. |
| PUB DATE | 2002-00-00 |
| NOTE | 19p.; Report from a think tank held October 15-16, 2002 in the Washington, DC area. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | For full text: http://www.ed.psu.edu/goodlinginstitute/images/research.pdf. Publication is available on alternative media on request. |
| PUB TYPE | Opinion Papers (120) |
| EDRS PRICE | EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Adult Basic Education; *Brainstorming; Educational Planning; Educational Policy; *Educational Research; *Family Literacy; Focus Groups; Futures (of Society); Integrated Curriculum; Intergenerational Programs; *Literacy Education; National Programs; Needs Assessment; Organizational Objectives; Parent Child Relationship; Participant Characteristics; Professional Development; *Research Methodology; *Research Needs; Research Problems; Student Evaluation; Tests |
| IDENTIFIERS | Impact Studies |

ABSTRACT

A think tank on researching family literacy was held to brainstorm a national research agenda for family literacy. The think tank brought together 12 researchers, policymakers, and practitioners involved in family literacy. Key themes emerging during the think tank were as follows: (1) family literacy is difficult to research because it is essentially a "black box"; (2) integration of four components--adult education, early childhood education, parent education, and parent-and-child together (PACT) time--is a hallmark of family literacy; (3) curricula in PACT time are especially lacking; (4) the selection of appropriate assessment instruments in family literacy is limited; and (5) determination of those who are best served by family literacy programs is critical. The following were among the items identified as belonging on the research agenda: (1) good measures of the components with demonstrated validity and reliability to assess the components' impact; (2) a multidisciplinary team approach using multiple research methods; (3) longitudinal research with cross-sectional data collection and multiple time frames for data collection; (4) research focusing on the differential impact of the four components for various subpopulations; and (5) quantitative measures to track program effects over time. Lists of 12 references and the think tank attendees are appended along with the Gooding Institute's goals. (MN)

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for Research in Family Literacy **Institute**

# A Research Agenda to Build the Future

*Report from Penn State's Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy Think Tank*

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***Family Literacy: A Research Agenda to Build the Future***
*Report from the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy Think Tank*

**Eunice N. Askov**
Distinguished Professor of Education
Co-Director, Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy

Published by the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy

The Pennsylvania State University
102 Rackley Building
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 865-0597 (phone)
(814) 863-6108 (fax)
ena1@psu.edu

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# Executive Summary

## *Family Literacy:*
### *A Research Agenda to Build the Future*

*Report from the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy Think Tank*

The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy sponsored a Think Tank on researching family literacy October 15 – 16 in the Washington, D.C. area. The Think Tank brought together researchers, policymakers, and practitioners who are involved in family literacy to brainstorm a national research agenda for family literacy. This research agenda is expected to focus the work of the Goodling Institute as well as guide research nationally in family literacy.

Following Mr. Goodling's introductory remarks, several researchers presented their varying perspectives on researching family literacy. Small group work then brainstormed the research questions, issues, and methods in family literacy followed. This report summarizes the insights gained during the two-day meeting. It is organized into discussions of the state of family literacy, problems in researching family literacy, and next steps in formulating the research issues to be addressed in future studies. While the report provides the details of the pivotal research issues, several major themes emerged:

- Family literacy is difficult to research since it is essentially a "black box," lacking a well-articulated definition and research-based concepts to guide practice. Family literacy programs look different at the local level not only because they are mandated to build on existing local resources but also because they are developed to meet the perceived needs of the local community and participating families. While well-intentioned and often well-planned, most family literacy programs are not designed around specific research-based family literacy practices. In fact, few research-based family literacy practices currently exist. Research is needed to guide practitioners in how to construct and implement effective family literacy programs.

- Integration of the four components (adult education, early childhood education, parent education, and PACT time), including administrative and practical coordination across educational providers, is a hallmark of family literacy programs. However, we lack the criteria to evaluate the extent to which integration and coordination are occurring. Furthermore, we lack indicators that social services are also integrated and coordinated with the family literacy program's educational services.

- Curricula are lacking especially in the heart of the family literacy program, namely, in parenting education and parent and child together (PACT) time. (While early childhood education offers several curricula, adult education has few curriculum frameworks.) These two components set family literacy programs apart from other adult basic and early childhood education programs, yet they remain largely undefined.

- Like curriculum, the selection of appropriate assessment instruments in family literacy is limited. Although adult basic and early childhood education have standardized instruments available to assess developmental and educational gains, these instruments are limited and, for the most part, inadequate. Measurement instruments for parenting education are even more limited, and assessments for PACT are non-existent. The field lacks research-based measurement tools that can assess progress in each component of family literacy. In addition, outcomes that move beyond performance on standardized tests need to be developed based on research.

- Finally, we need to know who is best served by family literacy programs. Participants in family literacy programs frequently need more than literacy instruction since they are indeed the "most in need" as mandated by the Even Start Act. We need research-based answers about the configuration of services that best meet the needs of different types of clients.

Belief in the intrinsic value of family literacy is common among those who work in the field. This, however, is not enough. We need to move forward in defining this educational approach and conducting research that will improve practice and clearly articulate the short-term outcomes and long-term impacts of participation on families. This will not be an easy task. Confounded variables make it especially difficult to conduct research in family literacy since literacy is so closely associated with other issues, such as psychological, social, and economic factors. Multi-disciplinary research teams, working in partnership with practitioners and policymakers, will need to apply diverse research methods to tackle this new area of research.

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# Family Literacy: *A Research Agenda to Build the Future*

The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy sponsored a Think Tank on researching family literacy on October 15 - 16 in the Washington, DC area. The purpose of the think tank was to bring together researchers, policy makers, and practitioners who are involved in family literacy to brainstorm a national research agenda for family literacy. The goal of this research agenda is to focus the work of the Goodling Institute as well as guide research nationally in family literacy.

Invitees included researchers from a variety of disciplines, including adult education, early childhood education, family literacy, multicultural and language education, psychology, communication, and so forth. The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL), the National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL), and the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy (Penn State) were also represented. Policymakers included representatives from adult education and early childhood education programs, including the National Institute for Literacy, US Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), US Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program, US Department of Health and Human Development (DHHS) Head Start Program, National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (state directors of adult education). Practitioners, including representatives from the National Center for Family Literacy and Laubach Literacy Action, were program leaders who are experienced in delivering family literacy programs. A list of attendees is attached to this report in Appendix A.

This report went through two stages of revision. First Think Tank participants were invited to comment on the draft report. After extensive revisions the participants were again asked for comments. The revision was also posted on the Goodling Institute web site as well as on the family literacy and National Coalition for Literacy listservs. Comments were invited; a few comments from the field were received on the second revision.

## *Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy*

The mission of the Goodling Institute is to improve family literacy education through research and its application to practice and professional development. Furthermore, the Goodling Institute provides national leadership to support and maintain high quality, integrated programs for families with educational needs.

The Goodling Institute was established at the end of the calendar year 2000 by the federal government to honor the retiring Congressman Bill Goodling for his untiring efforts in enacting the Even Start legislation. Penn State's College of Education was selected as the host organization because of the long-standing initiatives of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy in family literacy. The National Center for Family Literacy is a partner in the Goodling Institute charged to carry out certain activities in conjunction with the Goodling Institute.

Further information on the goals and activities of the Goodling Institute can be found in Appendix B to this report.

## *Origin and Organization of this Report*

This report is based on the results of the interactions that occurred in the multi-disciplinary meeting of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. While the agenda for the meeting is attached to this report in Appendix C, it should be noted that the meeting began with Mr. Goodling's vision for the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy and the Think Tank. Several resource people had been invited to give presentations: Judith Alamprese on researching family literacy, Heide Wrigley on considerations for non-native speakers of English, and Barbara Hanna Wasik on research in early childhood education. These presentations were followed with a general session of comments and questions about the field of family literacy.

Three facilitators led small multi-disciplinary groups on the following day: John Comings, Peter Waite, and Akeel Zaheer. The purpose was to brainstorm

the research issues that relate to family literacy. The small group work was followed by summaries to the large group with final comments and recommendations. This report attempts to summarize the insights that were gained during the two-day meeting. It is organized into discussions of the state of family literacy, problems in researching family literacy, and next steps in formulating the research issues to be addressed in future studies.

### *State of Family Literacy*

While definitions of family literacy vary, most include four components: Adult literacy instruction, child emergent or developmental literacy instruction, parenting education, and parent – child interaction. The integration of services for parents and children is the crux of family literacy and makes it different from other educational service provision. The assumption is that the combined effect of the four components is greater than that of each component separately. This approach is unique in that the relevant legislation requires that family literacy providers build on existing resources (i.e., adult basic and literacy education providers, early childhood education providers, school districts) to implement these coordinated services. However, quality of service provision may become an issue if the available providers are unable to offer services of high quality to produce positive outcomes. (In fact, requiring family literacy programs to build on existing services means that some of the components may not be of high quality. It puts the family literacy program in the difficult position of being mandated to use existing services even if they are not of high quality. While it may be more expensive for family literacy programs to offer all services, the programs then have more control over the quality of those services.)

Various assumptions exist regarding the efficacy of the family literacy approach to education. One assumption that policymakers and practitioners make about family literacy is that parents' gains may be even greater than they would be in a separate adult education program because their literacy skills are reinforced by their working with their children.

While adults may remain in the program longer than they would in a traditional adult education program because of their children's involvement, another assumption of family literacy is that parents have the time and willingness to participate for a very significant period of time in family literacy programs (e.g., one or more years). (However, the average family participates in a family literacy program about six to ten months, according to the national Even Start evaluation studies.) In fact, parents who have this kind of time may be welfare recipients, out-of-school youth who are parents, single parents, learning disabled or physically challenged adults, and poor and minority adults who suffer from a host of complex problems (e.g., poverty, drugs, gangs, inadequate and unsafe housing) that make literacy seem less important than other more basic needs. They may also be at the lowest literacy levels and require the longest periods of time in order to make significant progress. (Their children may also have complex learning difficulties.) Employed parents may have difficulty in meeting the commitments required in family literacy, namely, adult education, parent education, and parent – child interaction which all require greater time commitments than other programs.

Based on prior research showing a correlation between the mother's literacy level and the child's achievement in school, some assume that a causative relationship exists (i.e., if the mother's literacy level increases, so will the child's literacy achievement increase). This causative relationship is one of the major assumptions of family literacy. Similarly, however, we also assume that other factors, such as the parent's language usage, a literate environment in the home, and interest and encouragement from parents, also lead to the child's successful reading achievement in school. We assume that improving the parent's literacy level in a family literacy program will lead to improvement in environmental, social, and cultural factors that support literacy.

Four types of adult learning usually are assumed to occur in family literacy programs: Learning 1) to improve the adult's literacy development; 2) to benefit the child's literacy development; 3) to help with family management and life skills (e.g., economic outcomes); 4) to strengthen the family's

literacy development. These four outcomes for adults in family literacy programs correspond to the four components of family literacy.

The intergenerational transfer of cognitive abilities has been inferred from large-scale studies in which provision of educational opportunities for adults has been correlated with improved literacy achievement in their children (Sticht & Armstrong, 1994; Sticht, Beeler, & McDonald, 1992; Sticht, McDonald, and Beeler, 1992). The intergenerational transfer of cognitive abilities assumes a directionality of influence — that is, from parent to child. However, in non-English speaking families often the children negotiate the literacy demands for the parent (e.g., in shopping, doctors' offices, school communications). In these situations the children who learn English in school help their parents by not only meeting the daily demands of the English-speaking society but also helping them acquire skills in English.

The field of family literacy has now evolved to the point where all states are offering programs through the Even Start Act. A few states, such as Pennsylvania, have also created state-funded family literacy programs. While the concept is intellectually and intuitively appealing, the three large-scale national evaluations of Even Start programs to date have yielded mixed results in terms of program impact and effectiveness (St. Pierre, Swartz, Gamse, Murray, Deck, & Nickel, 1995; Tao, Gamse, & Tarr, 1998; St. Pierre, Ricciuti, Tao, Creps, Kumagawa, & Ross, 2001; St. Pierre, Ricciuti, et al., in press). Clearly, more research is needed that targets programs in which family literacy is well implemented in all four components that are of high quality.

While family literacy programs are still in their infancy, relative to more established compensatory programs like Head Start and Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, they are being questioned as perhaps an expensive mode of delivering services. The question is being raised about the "value added" of family literacy programs (National Institute for Child Health & Human Development, 2001). Is it possible that the same benefits from integrated family literacy programs could be derived from separate programs for adults and children? This over-arching question tests the assumptions that are discussed above.

### *Problems with Researching Family Literacy*

A major problem that has thwarted past research has been the attempt to study long-term effects in the framework of short-term funded research projects. The need for longitudinal research, with multiple shorter time frames within the long-term research, seems clear. Current research tends to consist of primarily descriptive and correlational studies or large-scale evaluation studies that encompass programs of varying quality and questionable data collection. While these studies are important, it is difficult to attribute positive outcomes to family literacy without the use of control groups. In preparation for the Think Tank, the Goodling Institute commissioned a document (Jenkins, 2001), prepared in advance for Think Tank participants, to summarize what is known in family literacy research.

Family literacy was described by participants as a "black box" to be informed by research and development. In other words, the concept of "family literacy" is not commonly understood and is being implemented in many different ways in programs. Therefore, it is very difficult to test the basic assumptions of family literacy as carried out in programs. For example, a family literacy program may have a very strong child component through a Head Start program but only a token GED program for the adult education component; the parenting and parent – child interaction components may also be weak. On the other hand, the family literacy program in the next county may be strong in all except the child component. Evaluation and research studies to date have not considered these differences. In fact, the issue of quality has not been well defined in any of the components. Hence, family literacy is considered a "black box" since what is offered in the four components tends to depend on local implementation. Since the legislation requires that the family literacy provider build on existing educational services – over which they often have little control in terms of quality – further variations often occur in local implementations of family literacy.

Furthermore, instructional staff may be poorly trained in one or more of the components of family literacy. Requirements vary across the states. The Certificate in Family Literacy, being developed by

the Goodling Institute and the National Center for Family Literacy to be delivered on Penn State's World Campus, is designed provide professional development to family literacy instructors. It is important for researchers is to address the variables related to staff qualifications in each component.

While researchers can measure program impacts (literacy and other outcomes), we still don't know what is essential to family literacy. What is the "intervention"? What is essential to family literacy? How do we test assumptions in isolation of programs? Since curricula do not generally exist for the adult education, parenting, or parent - child interaction components, researchers need to carefully describe the specific model (including the components) in the family literacy programs being studied. Likewise, research reports should also include information about the curricula, staff qualifications and training, and program structure.

It is also possible that the components may be differentially important to various sub-populations. For example, the parenting and parent – child interaction components may be extremely important in the case of very low functioning parents who do not know the importance of oral language development for their children. On the other hand, these components (parenting and parent – child interaction) may be handled differently for some non-native speakers of English due to their cultural and social beliefs and values. (For example, the FACES program has been acclaimed to be successful due to the adaptation to the Native American culture.) Furthermore, it is possible that family literacy may not be appropriate or necessary for all families. It may be that some do not need the intense level of service delivery and can be taught equally well through less expensive separate service provision.

Not only is it difficult to consider the cultural and social contexts for literacy instruction for native and non-native speakers of English, but also it is difficult to aggregate data across various sub-populations. For example, ESL and non-ESL programs do not use the same assessment instruments; therefore, it is not possible to aggregate subject data across these program types.

While we understand the importance and difficulty of integrating different administrative structures (early childhood education and adult education) as well as coordinating with various social services, this complexity is very difficult to measure and control as research variables. For example, how do we measure the complexity of interactions and services (e.g., family - community, parents - work, parents - children, intra - family, parent peer support group)?

Research in the past has not considered the quality of implementation of the four components of family literacy or studied the quality of service provision of each component. Implementation studies are needed to determine high quality programs so that research studies are conducted using programs that are fully implementing family literacy with high quality components. However, that raises the issue of the criteria or standards that are used to judge the quality of the implementation. It is possible that the evaluation studies are not finding significant effects in family literacy programs because they include low quality programs that wash out the effects of the high quality ones. How do we measure quality? States have developed indicators of program quality that are usually process-oriented and program performance standards that usually include both some process as well as learner outcomes. Since no national standards exist, variability exists across the states in how quality is defined and assessed.

Another problem lies in how to test the assumption of intergenerational transfer of cognitive/literacy abilities. How can the effects be measured? Past research has focused solely on the target child in the family literacy program, but what is the impact on the whole family, including older siblings who do not meet the enrollment criteria due to age?

### *Confounded Variables*

Literacy is closely associated with other variables. It is likely that low literacy and poverty are confounded variables as are minority status, unemployment or low wages, poor health and nutrition, poor housing, and so forth. For example, is an adult unemployable because s/he is low literate or is s/he disadvantaged by all the

variables associated with poverty? Reder (1998) showed in an analysis of the National Adult Literacy Survey findings that literacy has an impact on economic status (employment, earnings, poverty) even when education is controlled. Since this was a cross-sectional analysis, there was no direct measurement of change over time (in either literacy or economic status). This finding has not been investigated in family literacy programs.

Welfare reform has reduced the number of parents who are able to participate in family literacy (and other literacy) programs due to work requirements. One implication here is that providers may need to explore alternative delivery systems, such as distance education, to keep families involved in the literacy program. Another implication – supported with anecdotal evidence at this point – is that more parents with mental health problems are enrolling in family literacy programs bringing additional barriers to learning. Teachers are sometimes frustrated by the difficulty in teaching these clients and by their limited achievement gains.

Observation of some clients in family literacy programs shows that they come with many needs. Often these families have to be stabilized first through a network of services before they can begin to learn. This might even be considered a fifth component to the model (Alamprese, 2001). What is the impact of these social services? Is it essential that a family literacy program coordinate these services? Does the presence or absence of these social services confound the impact of the family literacy program? In other words, if these services were not available through the program, would the family drop out before an "intervention" can occur? Or are the services an essential part of the "intervention"? Should they be considered the responsibility of the family literacy program, or are they the responsibility of other social service agencies?

Another confounded variable may be the effect of the self-efficacy that can occur for a parent who is now able to teach her child literacy skills. Do the parent's literacy skills improve because she is now able to teach her child, or do they improve because of literacy instruction in the adult education component? While this effect is the result of the integration of the four components, is it so great that it justifies the extra expense and effort required for the integration of the adult and child education systems?

Researching family literacy is similar to problems with other prevention research — we don't know what would happen without the intervention. The treatment groups may possibly consist of self-selected subjects who are attracted to family literacy programs even though other options may exist. Although it is challenging to find good control group comparisons, given the many confounded variables, it can be done and is essential to progress in the field to find a variety of naturalistic and experimental comparisons of no-intervention, low-intensity intervention, and high-intensity intervention groups.

### *Who Participates in Family Literacy Programs and Other Open Questions?*

These questions were generated as part of the Think Tank. Future research should include these questions about the clients served by family literacy programs. Other related questions can be found in the report issued by the National Institute for Child Health & Human Development (2001).

Who are the clients? Who is best served by a family literacy program? Does this configuration of services attract people who otherwise would not usually go to an adult education program? What are the components that lead to greater impact as well as better retention of families in the program? Are there sub-populations that particularly benefit from family literacy? (For example, do the four components in family literacy programs uniquely meet the needs of native or non-native speakers of English?) What are the barriers to participation and retention? Why does family literacy appear to appeal mostly to women? At what level of adult literacy skill development are the clients' needs best met in a family literacy program? Does the parent's literacy level have an impact on the ability to support the child's development? Is there a causative relationship between the parent's literacy level and the child's development or level of success in school?

The effects of participating in family literacy programs need to be studied more broadly. For

example, are adults more involved/engaged in their child's school as a result of the family literacy program? (Furthermore, what are the optimal school environments to encourage involvement?) What are other impacts of this involvement on the adult and the child/children? What are the relationships of the instructor(s) to the adult and to the child? What is the relationship among the parents in a family literacy program? Does peer support influence the engagement in learning of the parents? What is the impact of these variables? How can they be assessed?

Who should be the target subjects — parents or their children? It is possible that the family literacy program is differentially effective for one group but not the other. The age of the children may also affect the impact of family literacy. How are children affected differentially depending on their ages while their parents participate in family literacy programs? (Intuitively, it makes sense that younger children may be more heavily influenced by family literacy than their older siblings who are in school.)

### *Next Steps in Research*

Research needs to focus on what is unique to family literacy – including parenting and parent – child interaction as well as the integration of the four components – if it is to determine the "value added" of family literacy. A related question is determining the optimal conditions under which "systems" of services operate for families. How are these various systems coordinated and integrated? What factors enable them to work smoothly? What is the best sequence for delivering services? For example, should literacy instruction be delayed until the family is stabilized?

Good measures of the components (with demonstrated validity and reliability) are needed to assess their impact. Impact on both adults and children needs to be considered more broadly than only standardized achievement test scores. We need to look at social welfare impacts (e.g., improved employability) in addition to test scores. Retention in a program may also be considered an intermediate impact of the program if it leads to positive gains in literacy skills. We need to monitor the level of engagement of adults and children participating in the four components as predictors of progress.

Multi-disciplinary teams of researchers using multiple research methods should conduct research for best results. Both quantitative and qualitative designs (mixed methods) can contribute to answering the many research questions associated with family literacy. For example, ethnographic research can examine the complexity of literacy attainment in family literacy programs within broader social/cultural contexts. On the other hand, meta-analysis of existing studies, especially those with large-scale data sets, can also yield helpful information about literacy skills of adults and children as well as correlational data about the intergenerational transfer of cognitive abilities.

Longitudinal research with cross-sectional data collection and multiple time frames for data collection embedded in the research design is important to determine the long-term impact of family literacy. Researchers need to focus on the sustained outcomes that affect the family's abilities to function with literacy tasks, needs, and aspirations. While prior research (Purcell-Gates, 2000) has already demonstrated that a child's emergent literacy is linked to the frequency and complexity of the reading and writing that occurs naturally at home, research needs to demonstrate that these effects can result from family literacy programs.

The "value added" question in family literacy needs to be addressed within well-implemented programs. If low quality programs are included in the research, it should be only for comparison purposes. The criteria or standards for high quality implementation need to be decided by joint decision-making teams including researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

Research needs to focus on the differential impact of the four components for various sub-populations perhaps through studying the interaction effects. For example, it may be that certain groups are more likely than others to change their literacy practices in a positive direction as a result of the parenting and parent – child interaction components of family literacy. We need to

determine the best practices in these components of family literacy programs that lead to these changes. We also need to study the changes that occur in other family variables, such as the parent's employability or health status. Furthermore, we need to study the instructional approaches and practices (and other predictors) that lead to the greatest transformations for adults and children.

Most data on family variables are self-reported. Other measures may provide valuable information in addition to self-report. Quantitative measures are especially needed to permit researchers to track effects over time in addition to the rich descriptions that can result from qualitative data.

Research needs to inform policy and practice, not solely for the sake of research. This decision affects the dissemination process. Practitioners need to be closely involved in formulating the research questions as well as in carrying out the research studies. They, with the researchers and policymakers, need to figure out how the findings can lead to program improvement and professional development.

### *Concluding Remarks*

A common framework for family literacy is needed for building a research agenda. The components should be researched to determine the essential elements recognizing, however, that every family literacy program may differ in the clientele that it is serving, the qualifications of the staff, the size of the budget, and so forth. Perhaps what may be needed most at this point is a set of achievable outcomes for families, adults, and children that can be documented based on contemporary knowledge of assessment and evaluation methods. Rigorous research is needed to relate these outcomes to program processes and characteristics. Given the difficulties of controlling all the relevant variables, as described above, this research could be situated in high quality programs with communication linkages established among them so that findings can be shared. Practitioners need to work closely with researchers on this effort to ensure that the research that is produced is usable and reality-based – in short, a theory-driven, field-informed process. It is hoped that this report will help move the field forward in formulating research questions for future research and evaluation efforts.

The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy can serve as a synthesizing organization and catalyst for change by identifying research issues in family literacy and tying professional development to research. Its vision is to identify the gaps in knowledge to set a research agenda for the future that is multi-disciplinary and incorporates multiple research methods. It can also help the field by encouraging the development of graduate student research and professorial researchers through fellowships and graduate assistantships, leveraging alternative sources of funding, and working in cooperation with federal agencies (such as the National Institute for Literacy) in the dissemination process. This vision is only beginning to be fulfilled with this report.

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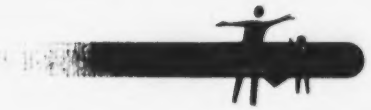


# Attendees of Think Tank

***Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy***
***October 15-16, 2001***

**Judith Alamprese,** Principal Associate
ABT Associates, Inc.
4800 Montgomery Lane
Hampden Square, Suite 600
Bethesda, MD 20814-5341
301-718-3168, Fax: 301-652-3618
judy_alamprese@ABTassoc.com

**Sandra Baxter,** Acting Director
National Reading Excellence Initiative
National Institute for Literacy
1775 I Street, NW, Suite 730
Washington, DC 20006-2401
202-233-2025, ext. 2054, Fax: 202-233-2050
sbaxter@nifl.gov

**Forrest Chisman**
Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy
106 Shipping Creek Road
Stevensville, MD 21666
410-643-0135
forrest@crosslink.net

**John P. Comings,** Director
National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, Harvard Graduate School of Education
106 Nichols House, Appian Way
Cambridge, MA 02138
617-496-0516, Fax: 617 495-4811
John_Comings@harvard.edu

**Sharon Darling,** President
National Center for Family Literacy
325 West Main Street
Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200
Louisville, KY 40202-3449
502-584-1133, Fax: 502-584-0172
sdarling@famlit.org

**Vivian L. Gadsden,** Director
National Center on Fathers & Families
University of Pennsylvania
3340 Market Street, Suite 460
Philadelphia, PA 19101
215-573-5500, Fax: 215-573-5508
Vgadsden@ncoff.gse.upenn.edu

**William F. Goodling,** Senior Advisor
Sagamore Associates
805 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-312-7400, Fax: 202-312-7401
wfg123@cs.com

**Carol Scheffner Hammer,** Assistant Professor
Penn State University
Department of Communication Disorders
110 Moore Building
University Park, PA 16802-3100
814-865-1849, Fax: 814-863-3759
cjh22@psu.edu

**Andrew Hayes,** Associate Professor
University of North Carolina
Department of Educational Design & Management
601 S. College Road
Wilmington, NC 28403
910-962-3353
hayesa@uncwil.edu

**Cheryl Keenan,** Director
Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education
PA Department of Education
333 Market Street, 12th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
717-787-5532, Fax: 717-783-0583
ckeenan@state.pa.us

**Judith Kiley,** Coordinator
Toyota Family Literacy Project
Rochester City School District
131 W. Broad Street
Rochester, NY 14614
716-262-8239
judith.kiley@rcsd.k12.org

**Laura Lazo**
US Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Compensatory Education Programs
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
Laura.Lazo@ed.gov

**Reynaldo F. Macias,** Professor
Chicana/o Studies, Education and Applied Linguistics
UCLA, CE Chavez Center
7353 Bunche Hall, Box 951559
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1559
Reynaldo@csrc.ucla.edu

**Peggy McCardle,** Associate Chief
National Institute of Child Health & Human Development, 4B05
6100 Executive Boulevard, MSC 7510
Rockville, MD 20852-7510
301-435-6863, Fax: 301-480-7773
pm43q@nih.gov

**Patricia McKee**
US Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Compensatory Education Programs
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
particia.mckee@ed.gov

**Keith Nelson,** Professor of Psychology
Penn State University
414 Moore Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-863-1747
keith-nelson-art@psu.edu

**Ronald S. Pugsley,** Director
US Department of Education
Division of Adult Education and Literacy
330 C Street, SW, Switzer Building, Room 4428
Washington, DC 20202-7240
202-205-9872, Fax: 202-205-8973
Ronald.Pugsley@ed.gov

**Victoria Purcell-Gates**
Michigan State University, College of Education, Department of Teacher Education
304 Erickson Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
517-432-4840, Fax: 517-622-0651
vpgates@msu.edu

**Stephen Reder,** Professor, Chair
Department of Applied Linguistics
Portland State University, POB 751
Portland, OR 97207-0751
503-725-3999, Fax: 503-725-4139
Reders@pdx.edu

**Thomas Schultz,** Director
Head Start Bureau
US Department of Health & Human Services
330 C Street, SW, Switzer Building, Room 2018
Washington, DC 20201
202-205-8323, Fax: 202-260-9336
tschultz@acf.dhhs.gov

**Lynn Selmser,** Consultant
3824 Linda Lane
Annandale, VA 22003
703-560-5541, Fax: 703-698-8058
lcselmser@erols.com

**Thomas Sticht,** President & Sr. Scientist
Applied Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences
2062 Valley View Boulevard
El Cajon, CA 92019-2059
619-444-9133
tsticht@aznet.net

**Sondra Stein,** Senior Analyst
Policy and Programs
National Institute for Literacy
1775 I Street, NW, Suite 730
Washington, DC 20006-2401
202-233-2025, Fax: 202-233-2050
sstein@nifl.gov

**Sandra Strunk,** Supervisor of Adult Education
Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13
1110 Enterprise Road
East Petersburg, PA 17520
717 519-1006, Fax: 717-560-6150
sandy strunk@iu13.k12.pa.us

**Kevin Talley,** Executive Vice President
Sagamore Associates
805 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-312-7400, Fax: 202-312-7401
kdtalley@sagamoreassociates.com

**Peter Waite,** Executive Director
Laubach Literacy Action
PO Box 131, 1320 Jamesville Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210
315-422-9121, Fax: 315-422-6369
pwaite@laubach.org

**Barbara Hanna Wasik,** Professor of Education
University of North Carolina
111 Peabody Hill, Room CB3500
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919-962-1542
wasik@unc.edu

**Gail Weinstein,** Professor of English
San Francisco State University
123 Rivas Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94132-2140
415-587-1010
gailw@sfsu.edu

**Heide Spruck Wrigley,** Sr. Research Associate
Aguirre International
480 East 4th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94401
650-373-4923, Fax: 650-348-0260
hwrighley@aiweb.com

**Akeel Zaheer,** Vice President, Knowledge
Development & Innovation
National Center for Family Literacy
325 W. Main Street, Waterfront Plaza, Ste.200
Louisville, KY 40202-3449
502-584-1133, Fax: 584-0172
azaheer@famlit.org

**Eunice N. Askov,** Professor & Co-Director
Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy
Goodling Institute for Research in Family Lit.
Penn State University
102 Rackley Building
University Park, PA 16802-3202
ENA1@psu.edu

**Barbara Van Horn,** Co-Director
Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy
Goodling Institute for Research in Family Lit.
Penn State University
102 Rackley Building
University Park, PA 16802-3202
814-865-5877, Fax: 814-863-6108
BLV1@psu.edu

**Drucie Weirauch,** Project Assistant
Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy
Penn State University
102 Rackley Building
University Park, PA 16802-3202
814-865-6686, Fax: 814-863-6108
Dcw113@psu.edu

## Goals of the Goodling Institute *for Research in Family Literacy*

# Goal 1

## *Research*

*To develop a sound conceptual, interdisciplinary research base for guiding practice and policy, including the development of a cohort of researchers, graduate students and fellows who will focus on family literacy research.*

# Goal 2

## *Professional Development*

To build, in cooperation with the National Center for Family Literacy, the capacity of the field to provide high quality, research-based instruction and program development in family literacy.

# Goal 3

## *Policy*

To provide leadership in family literacy through communication and collaborative action with professional organizations, state departments of education, policy makers and the general public.

- Identify research issues in consultation with practitioners and researchers, resulting in a national family literacy research agenda. This agenda will focus the work of the Goodling Institute and guide research nationally.

- Based on the research agenda, conduct a series of replicable and reliable research studies with a clear plan of research that will move the field forward.

- Support graduate students through assistantships to focus on family literacy research. This support will encourage development of researchers in family literacy.

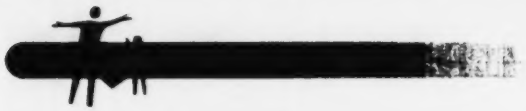
- Establish and implement a family literacy fellowship program, offering fellowship opportunities to candidates in appropriate locations and fostering professionalism in the field.

- Establish a Family Literacy Certificate Program to be offered via distance learning through the Penn State World Campus. This Certificate will be developed collaboratively with the NCFL and Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy and will integrate research findings and best practices identified through research efforts. Credits earned through the Certificate Program will be applicable toward a family literacy focused Penn State Master's Degree in Adult or Early Childhood Education.

- Based on their current training program and findings from research studies, NCFL also will design and deliver a non-credit family literacy certificate program for practitioners that can be integrated with existing non-credit credential and training programs.

- Develop a national Board of Advisors to include representatives from the University, the Goodling family, the NCFL, office of the Governor of Pennsylvania, state directors of family literacy programs, family literacy practitioners, relevant government agencies, and members at large.

- Conduct annual Policy Forums on family literacy policy and practice for policy makers, practitioners, and families in collaboration with the NCFL, Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, and the National Institute for Literacy.



# Agenda: Think Tank *Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy*

***Monday, October 15***

3:00 Arrival, refreshments, informal discussion

3:30 Introductions
Logistics
Goals of the Goodling Institute –
Mr. Goodling and Barbara Van Horn, Co-Director for Administration

4:30 Purpose of the think tank –
Eunice (Nickie) Askov, Co-Director for Research
Overview of the state of research in family literacy from 3 perspectives:
Judy Alamprese, Heide Wrigley, and Barbara Wasik
Initial insights, comments, questions, and discussion to guide the think tank
Overview of the next day

6:30 Break

7:00 Dinner and informal discussions

***Tuesday, October 16***

8:30 Breakfast

9:00 Orientation to the tasks of the small groups

9:15 Small groups meet to brainstorm research issues and gaps in what we know

10:30 Break and refreshments

11:00 Resume small group work

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Reports from small group discussions
Draft of research issues and gaps in knowledge to be used in setting a research agenda for family literacy

4:00 Adjourn...thanks!

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